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SOURCE Neue Zuercher Zeitung.COMMUNISTS MEET MANY OBSTACLES IN SOVIETIZING HUNGARY

The most important of the various resolutions which have evolved from speeches by Hungarian Communist leaders at the recent Second Party Conference in Budapest is the decree that no more agricultural collectives are to be formed from 10 March to autumn; the peasants will be left undisturbed from spring planting until after the harvest. At the time the decree was issued, however, Hungarian economic dictator Erno Gerö mentioned that "Hungary, because of its special situation, must follow the so-called New Economic Policy which was first put into practice in the USSR." This involves the extension of food rationing.

Changes in Agrarian Policy

These decrees and declarations show that the Communist agrarian policy in Hungary has landed in a blind alley. The rationing of food in this rich agricultural country, which according to Rakosi, can look back on a good grain harvest, is indeed a sign of failure. The fact that the Communists have been forced to decree a temporary suspension of their collectivization policy reveals the real extent of their mismanagement on the one hand and the resistance of the peasants on the other hand.

In any event, this relaxation does not mean that the Communists wish now to abandon the collectivization of agriculture; it is more a case of withdrawal forced by difficulties which will prove to be only a "strategic withdrawal."

Whereas in Bulgaria over half the arable land has been collectivized, Hungary is still far behind in this respect. The producers' cooperatives operate 826,500 cadastral yokes and comprise 118,000 households with 160,000 members. The state farms have an area of 570,000 cadastral yokes. Altogether, the socialist sector of agriculture constitutes, according to Rakosi, only one seventh of the arable land area and a very small percentage of all agricultural land. But from August 1950 to the middle of January 1951, the area of collective lands increased about 50 percent. Nevertheless, over a million farms are still in private hands.

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Production has not quite reached the prewar level, although according to government plans, it should have exceeded that level long ago. Rakosi is, therefore, unsatisfied and feels that "the greatest drag on our socialist development is the condition of agriculture." He referred to the fact that even Communist Party members do not want to join the agricultural producers' cooperatives. Rural support of the Communists appears generally to be small, since 40 percent of all party members come from Budapest, which contains less than one sixth of Hungary's population. These disclosures are evidence that Hungarian peasants still make all sorts of difficulties for Moscow's representatives and that their passive resistance is not yet broken.

Resistance to the Communist regime is apparent in other fields, too. Gerö speaks openly of an underground movement which he accuses of wage frauds, falsification of work norms, sabotage of the Stakhanovite movement, and, above all, large-scale boarding of food and queuing up in front of stores. This group of miscreants is allegedly made up of capitalists, right-wing socialists, and clerical reactionaries who have joined forces. The warped imagination of the Communists sees here a sinister plot, whereas the failures of the totalitarian economy and the insufficiency of the monstrously swollen bureaucracy are the actual reason for shortages, while the machinations of the underground movements are more probably the expression of natural dissident reaction on the part of oppressed workers and consumers.

Socialization of Small Industry

In the field of industrial and artisan production, however, the Communists are not refraining from further collectivization. Industry, large building concerns, transportation, banking, and wholesale trade have already been completely socialized, as have 67 percent of retail trade and 10.6 percent of small industry. By the end of 1951, 97 percent of small industry is to be incorporated into the socialist sector. In this way labor will be released for major industry, which is supposed to undergo enormous expansion under the Five-Year Plan.

By the end of 1954, 670,000 to 680,000 new workers are to be placed in industry. They will be drawn from retail trade, small industry, and agriculture. In addition, youth and women will be drafted to a greater extent for heavy work in industry. To improve productivity further, the piecework system will be introduced. Workers are not allowed to change jobs any more. A similar ruling exists in East Germany, where the peasants are obliged to remain on their farms.

Infiltration of Soviet Specialists

Hungary is now to be transformed into a country of iron and steel, of industry and machines. The Five-Year Plan calls for a production increase in heavy industry of 280 percent and in light industry of 150 percent over 1949. The impetus for this tremendous expansion apparently has come from the Kremlin, which is unloading the burden of its rearmament more and more on the satellite countries. However, among the Hungarian Communists themselves, doubts as to the fairness of this development have cropped up.

Even Zoltan Vas, President of the Hungarian Planning Office and right-hand man of Erno Gerö, had to admit that "considerable disproportions" would result if heavy industry were expanded in a rapid and one-sided manner. The Communist leaders are silent about the problem of procuring raw materials, coal, and especially iron. They mention only the aid of the USSR, without whose support and guidance the Five-Year Plan could not be realized, and the arrival of Soviet factory plans, Stakhanovites, engineers, and scientists. The growing infiltration of Soviet specialists in all branches of the Hungarian economy could not be more unequivocally admitted.

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The Soviets also give enlightenment on political questions concerning the party and instruct and direct the Hungarian Communists.

Martin Horvath, member of the Politburo, recently wrote in the press that "the theory and practice of the Soviet Communist Party and the teachings of Lenin and Stalin can be considered from the very first as applicable and obligatory for our party." Nevertheless, the Soviet supreme command leaves room for internal party discussions. In the party elections, Rakosi solidified his position. He was reelected General Secretary of the Hungarian Workers' Party and appears at the very top of the list of members of the Politburo, the Orgburo, and the Central Committee.

The office of President of the party, which was occupied until about a year ago by the deposed President of the Presidial Council of the Republic, Arpad Szakasits, is no longer filled. Similarly, the posts of deputy general secretaries have been done away with. Except for Szakasits, virtually all former Social Democrats have disappeared from party offices, even such prominent persons as former cabinet ministers Georg Marosan and Istvan Riesz. This is their reward for active collaboration in liquidating the Social Democratic Party. The only one of their aides left in office is Szakasits' successor, Sandor Ranoi.

Purges

The Communist speakers at the party conference left no doubt that the cleansing of the party will be continued inexorably. The aim of the class struggle is not only the elimination of every vestige of opposition, the suppression of every person who owns property or has a non-Marxist background, but also to fill labor camps and provide cheap or slave labor. Hungarian scoffers comment that, as a consequence of the constantly growing work burden, beds can soon be done away with and saved, since the unswerving Communist is always vigilant, reaction does not sleep, the worker must work day and night, and whoever does not do so has long since landed in a concentration camp.

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